

## **Reflection on Guigang Working Trip (25<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2017)**

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As an architecture, this project trip to Guigang, China to study the architecture of a rural school was an invaluable one in helping me gain real-life working experience on the field.

My job was to help create a user survey to identify the needs and wants of the children and the community and to create quick sketches of construction problems in the school. One of the challenges we faced was figuring out what information we needed to glean from the community; however, with the help of the architect, we were able to find out what parameters we needed to investigate (for example, culture, religion, distance of school from hospital, etc.). With this information, we created a short survey, which the other members of the team conducted on the next day. On the second day, I assisted in creating sketches of various cracks in the school for documentation and took pictures of the school from various vantage points. We got this information in order to determine the extent of structural damage there was in the structure and to determine what kinds of views we should integrate into the design of a new school we hope to create.

Through the trip, I not only learned the hard skills needed in practicing architecture in the field, but also the soft skills of working with different stakeholders from my project team mates to the local teachers and children. I also got to learn more about the hospitable nature of the Chinese people and the kinds of values and traditions they hold.